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Former prof admits spying; sentenced to 10 years in jail

LONDON (UPI) — In a sudden twist in his spy trial, a former university professor pleaded guilty yesterday to passing NATO secrets to the Soviets and was sentenced to 10 years in jail.

Canadian-born Hugh Hambleton, 60, received the jail term for photographing and passing top-secret documents to the Soviets during the 1950s when he worked in Paris for NATO as an economic adviser.

"Even though these offenses were committed a long time ago, they catch up with you in the end," the judge, Justice Croom Johnson, told Hambleton at London's Old Bailey criminal court.

The sentencing followed a dramatic change of plea by Hambleton, who had denied two charges under Britain's Official Secrets Act during his seven-day trial.

Attorney General Sir Michael Havers told the court he had evidence knocking down Hambleton's defense that he acted as a double agent, passing the Russians information under the control of Canadian and French secret services.

Hambleton's defense counsel, John Lloyd-Eley, said the former professor of economics at Laval University, Montreal, had given Canadian intelligence details of how he gave the KGB hundreds of NATO documents in



Hugh C. Hambleton

exchange for a guarantee against prosecution.

Hambleton was warned that if he came to Britain he might be prosecuted but he traveled to London and was arrested, Lloyd-Eley said.

Hambleton, looked tired and remained silent apart from saying "guilty, sir," when the first charge against him was re-read.

The first charge was that between 1956-1961 he gave secret NATO mate-

rial to a Russian agent. The second charge alleged that between Sept. 1956 and Nov. 1979, Hambleton obtained information useful to an enemy.

The judge directed the jury to find Hambleton guilty of the first charge and ordered that the second charge be suspended for an indefinite period. Under English law, this means that the prosecution could bring the same charge against him again in the future.

Hambleton admitted Monday he had passed documents to the KGB, but claimed it was authorized by his Canadian and French spy masters as "disinformation" designed to confuse the Soviets.

Havers read statements from Raymond Marc, head of the Soviet department of French intelligence, and from Jean Giroud, director general of the security service of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, which said the professor had never been a French or Canadian agent.

Hambleton, a defense funding specialist, claimed he spied on the Soviets for Canada and France, and in classic double-agent style, had let the KGB think he was working for it.

He also contended on Monday he was spying on France for Canadian intelligence. But Havers said that Canadian intelligence chiefs had also denied that allegation.